

THE IMPACT OF CRITICAL SERVICE LEARNING PROJECTS ON PRESERVICE
TEACHERS

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DEDICATION

I have dreamed about what I would say when I got to this point. Often, I thought that it would never become a reality. However, on this day and at this moment, I know that all things are possible, and I am so full of thanks for those that did not give up on me when I wanted to give up on myself. Thank you to all my instructors over the years, but especially Dr. Mary Twining and Dr. Dilla Buckner of Clark Atlanta University. Both altered my life trajectory for the better and like many teachers may not be aware of the importance of a single act of faith placed in a student's potential. Teachers are superheroes who rarely see the fruits of their labor.

There are many that were integral in my educational pursuits, but I dedicate this achievement to my family, especially my mother Georgia Mack and my father Ulysses Barrington Mack, who continue to be my greatest supporters. Without them, none of this is possible. To my sister Valorie Salahuddin who has always been willing to listen, support and advise no matter what was going on in her personal world, thank you for never being too busy for me. To my wife DeAnna Mack, your patience, love, understanding, and encouragement has been more valuable than you could ever realize, and I thank you. Chase, Caleb, and Payton, you are the inspiration for everything I do, and I hope that I make you proud.

Lastly, I would like to dedicate this achievement to the voice inside my head that kept urging me on. Thank you.

ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this qualitative study is to describe how preservice teachers are affected by involvement in culturally sustaining service-learning projects on a college campus. There is value for the at-risk student using preservice teachers for this study. Because there are constant societal changes based on differences in socio-economic and racial dynamics, as well as educational need, amongst student populations, a study that analyzes the opinions of those who are most likely to affect change is imperative. In other words, the problem in education is that students constantly must adapt to changes and preservice teachers need to be able to adapt as well. Future researchers will be able to use the research developed from this study to create solutions that assist in reducing a disconnect between teachers and the needs of the student. Three themes emerged from the data collected from the semi-structured individual interviews with the participants which were: environment, diversity, expectation. This study was designed to understand the essence of the participants' experiences. As a result of this study, several implications for policies and practice arose. There is a need for preservice teachers to understand they have decided by their career choice that they are committing to a career that has a problem with retention.

KEY WORDS: Preservice teachers, At-risk students, Service learning projects, and Qualitative.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

Education is more than words on a page or books in a library. Education is the acquisition of knowledge and sometimes the measure by which people are categorized and judged by society. Types of education vary just as much as types of literacies. Young black males, for example, participate in a myriad of experiences and these educational experiences vary their exposure to and attitudes toward formal education. Statistics reflect that out of the 50 states and the District of Columbia, 38 report that Black males graduate from high school at a lower percentage than White and Latino males (Musu-Gillette et al., 2016). The graduation rate for Black males is approximately 48.5% (Schott Foundation for Public Education, 2012). Programs that support mentorship or emulate the characteristics of mentorship, such as college campus-based service learning projects, could be beneficial to a variety of students, including black male students. In addition to those individuals served by these projects, mentors who are facilitating the service learning programs will have a positive influence as well.

Preservice teachers are preparing to enter a profession that brings unpredictability. This unpredictability will include classrooms of students who will have a variety of needs and may come from different cultures that may not be socially relatable to many preservice teachers. New solutions are necessary to prepare future educators. When involving preservice teachers in service learning projects that include varying cultures and ethnicities, the desired effect is they experience learning situations that will allow them to develop their schema. With an array of cultural awareness strategies, preservice

teachers may become sensitive to ethnic and cultural differences in student populations.

The research questions that will guide my study are the following:

1) (a) What are the perceptions of preservice teachers about working with at-risk youths in an afterschool program?

(2) How can teacher preparation programs use critical service learning projects to prepare preservice teachers for the diverse classroom?

Service learning is defined as an approach to teaching and learning in which students use academic knowledge and skills to address genuine community needs (Kendall, 1990). Similarly, The National and Community Service Act of 1990 defined service learning as experiences that foster structured learning through organized participation in activities that address community needs (Kendall, 1990).

Teachers must not only serve as educators, but they also should serve as mentors. They must be receptive to racial, ethnic, and cultural differences in their student populations. In the 2015-2016 school year, the United States Department of Education (USDE) recorded that 3,827,100 teachers taught in public school systems nationally. Of that number, 80.1% of public-school teachers were White, non-Hispanic. By comparison, 51% of all public elementary and secondary students in the U.S. were non-White. Administrators and faculty of postsecondary education programs should integrate multicultural awareness in all classes, and preservice teachers must take every opportunity to learn the benefits of cultural diversity. Although American Educational Research Association publishes a journal that focuses on service learning projects and programs, substantial research is needed to explore the positive results of service learning

projects with preservice teachers as mentors. For the past 20 years, mentoring programs for Black adolescent males has been at the forefront of educational discussions as a method to decrease the negative effects of societal marginalization, lower socioeconomic status, and lack of educational advancement comparable to other ethnicities.

Hall (2015) reflects on Community Based Mentoring (CBM) and School Based Mentoring (SBM) methods, and maintains that although many national, state and local agencies purport educational advancements, data to support these claims are scarce. In addition, an increased need to examine the effects of mentorship on self-efficacy and social development of adolescent Black males exists. DeWit, DuBois, Erdem, Larose, and Lipman (2016) reported the importance of data is to substantiate the claims that mentorship affect several aspects of emotional and physical development of all students.

Of the researchers attempting to explain the favorable response of mentorship by Black middle school adolescents, only Gordon, Iwamoto, Ward, Potts, and Boyd (2009) used “Afrocentric” mentoring intervention to examine the effects of racial identity and identification with academics using statewide-standardized tests (Gordon et al., 2009). The focus of the study analyzed one of the many problems that mentorship addresses, which is the concept of adolescent Black males lack of awareness regarding how education helps to distribute resources through access to different opportunities and reducing adverse experiences (Gordon et al., 2009). According to Osborne (1999), academic performance is connected to self-esteem. DeWit et al. (2016) examined the connection between youth mentoring and behavioral, developmental, and emotional

outcomes. The study indicated a positive correlation between mentorship lasting 12 or more months and positive outcomes for children participating in the study.

Origin of the Research Study

The origin of this dissertation came from comparing my own literacy experiences to those of preservice teachers. Fortunately, I had experiences that taught me to value education. As a mentor at the Boys and Girls Club in the 1990s, I met a variety of young boys and girls. Many of them had vibrant personalities and character, and I wondered what impact they would have on a world that was becoming more tolerant and diverse. The Boys and Girls Club was in a public housing project close to my college campus in Atlanta, Georgia. Working as a summer mentor without experience, I did not realize the poor conditions in which these children lived. My naivety led me to believe that they were in good homes even if they lived in the housing projects. It was not until the end of the program that I realized my ignorance. I was shocked when the program administrator shared stories of past members who had come and gone while suffering a variety of adverse outcomes. Typically, these outcomes were not about death or incarceration; they were about educational indifference. Many of the members dropped out of school and gave up on education because of reasons they felt were valid at the time. Fortunately, my parents could provide guidance and a safe environment in which to live. I grew up in a household with parents who were teachers, and they had a sincere belief in the importance of education and its influences in all aspects of life.

My mother was a public-school English teacher who believed that the ability to communicate effectively was the difference between a student and a scholar. Tested daily

were my comprehension of language knowledge, and my ability to think critically. If I mispronounced a word, my mom or dad promptly corrected me. If I made a statement that appeared to lack forethought, my parents asked for clarification with an explanation. I remember asking myself how my mother became critical of speaking incorrectly or making statements before thinking; however, as a young adult, I truly understood why she had high expectations for my ability to think and communicate. She taught students my age and could see the areas where they needed help. Because of her love for me, her sincere interest in my future, and her teacher training, she could not allow me to go be unprepared.

My father was a music teacher who taught special needs students, and his training prepared him to use music to broaden minds. Throughout his career, he had many roles as a music teacher, and as his roles changed, I can remember the message of his lessons. Exposure to the arts and the comprehension of music was just as significant as the English lessons my mother espoused in our home. Music is a language that can be spoken anywhere and understood by anyone, no matter the ethnic or cultural background. Similar to my mother, he too was a student in an education program that taught preservice teachers the importance of how to teach literacy effectively. Like my parents, I too am a teacher with my own children who are maturing in a world that appears to value literacy less than previous generations, producing unprepared students. My children have had their struggles, but I extend the same level of patience and understanding that my parents afforded me. Unfortunately, some students do not have the support network or suffer from life situations that place them at risk. With the ever-increasing pressure placed

upon public school teachers to meet the needs of the population of students that are continuously changing, this study will be beneficial to policy makers, administrators, and practitioners. Those individuals charged with making necessary changes to future educational programs can analyze the research from this study by discussing techniques that will prepare preservice teachers to avoid cultural/ethnic/racial bias.

Statement of the Problem

Preservice teachers can benefit students in critical service learning projects and this study is important in analyzing data. Because there are constant societal changes based on differences in socio-economic and racial dynamics, as well as educational need, amongst student populations, a study that analyzes the opinions of those who are most likely to affect change is imperative. In other words, the problem in education is that students constantly must adapt to changes and preservice teachers need to be able to adapt as well. Future researchers will be able to use the research developed from this study to create solutions that assist in reducing a disconnect between teachers and the needs of the student.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study is to describe how preservice teachers are affected by involvement in culturally sustaining service-learning projects on a college campus.

Because of research that analyzes marginalized populations, such as Black males, emerging interest in new and developing theories exists. Ladson-Billings (1995) introduced the concept of culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) to address the need for

cultural inclusion in education, and her interest in helping all students eventually shaped education programs that approached the need for socially relevant material to teach racially/ethnically diverse students. McCarther and Davis (2017) stated “when Ladson-Billings (1995) began to search for strategies to reach students who were struggling to achieve, she was met with scholarship that defined these students in purely deficit terms-lacking in cultural and intellectual capital” (p. 76). According to Ladson-Billings (2014), “student learning and academic achievement, rather than classroom and behavior management, cultural competence versus cultural assimilation or eradication, and sociopolitical consciousness rather than school-based task that have no beyond school application” will not help at-risk students become confident, competent citizens (p. 76). “Cultural Relevant Pedagogy evolved from the influence of Critical Race Theory (CRT)” (McCarther & Davis, 2017). The primary catalyst for CRT was the critical legal studies movement of the 1970s (Brayboy, 2005; Lynn, Yosso, Solorzano, & Parker, 2002).

According to Delgado (1995), CRT acknowledges that racist values and beliefs are a part of American society and that its connection to White privilege and White supremacy negatively affects marginalized populations, such as Black males. These prejudiced values are entrenched within legislation that has controlled educational policies and housing practices that appear ordinary and normal to White culture. Matsuda et al. (1993) maintained that six themes define Critical Race Theory. First, the individuals who developed CRT understood that racism was endemic to American life. Secondly, CRT reflects skepticism toward dominant legal claims of neutrality, objectivity, colorblindness, and meritocracy. Third, the developers of CRT challenged historicism

and insisted on a contextual/historical analysis of the law, and these theorists adopted a stance that presumes that racism has contributed to all contemporary manifestations of group advantage and disadvantage. Fourth, Critical Race theorists insisted on recognition of the experiential knowledge of people of color and their communities of origin to analyze law and society. Fifth, CRT is interdisciplinary and sixth, CRT was developed to work toward eliminating racial oppression as part of the broader goal of ending all forms of oppression (Matsuda et al., 1993).

Ladson-Billings' CRP theory has evolved into the concept of culturally sustaining pedagogy (CSP) proposed by Paris (2012) that "seeks to perpetuate and foster—to sustain—linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism as part of the democratic project of schooling" (p. 93). In her CSP theory, Paris (2012) asked teachers to go beyond their initial acceptance and tolerance of varying cultures of students and create inclusive learning environments by including non-traditional resources as teaching tools. This is a useful theory for preservice teachers if applied in the classroom because of their capability to effect change by using a variety of methods with students. Pitre et al. (2017) analyzed preservice teacher's attitudes towards civic action and service self-efficacy after participating in academic service-learning with K–2 youth at school-university partnership sites. The participants were enrolled in an intensive alternative certification master's degree program. Prior to stating the outcomes, Pitre et al. (2017) revealed:

Existing literature suggests that one of the positive impacts of service-learning is increasing understanding and acceptance of diversity... discuss the importance of service-learning with K–12 students whose cultures are vastly different than the

preservice teachers' cultures as a necessary condition for increased understanding and acceptance of diversity. (p. 9)

Pitre et al. (2017) reflected positive outcomes, such as increased commitment to civic action and engagement. Also, Pitre et al. reported participants would potentially have increased confidence, which would allow them to engage positively in diverse communities. By involving preservice teachers in service learning projects on college campuses, they could be motivated to effect change as mentorship figures.

Significance of Study

In many cases, preservice teachers who work with critical service learning programs are educating youth but are also serving in the capacity of mentors. At-risk youths involved in critical service learning projects are often a part of marginalized communities and would benefit from positive representatives associated with education who are addressing their needs. According to Darling et al. (2006), mentoring needs are organized around four topics. These topics are: (a) a program's documented effectiveness; (b) the extent to which mentor, youth, and program characteristics influence effectiveness; (c) the processes that link mentoring to outcomes; and (d) the extent to which efforts to provide mentoring have reached and engaged these youth, have been implemented with high quality, and have been adopted and sustained by host organizations and settings.

The findings of this study may be useful for preservice teachers, teachers, administrators, and policy makers. These professionals are aware of complexities of being an educator and would benefit from information that aids in their ability to connect

with diverse student populations that have a myriad of needs. Methods of teaching preservice teachers could also be enhanced to include more effective training relative to issues surrounding diversity.

Theoretical Framework

This study is shaped by Bandura's (2003) suggestion that behavior can be adjusted by providing behavior examples, such as those behaviors exhibited by mentorship. Individuals can learn from one another if there is a focus on attention, memory, and motivation (Bandura, 2003). In addition, the inference is that other practices or habits, other than those targeted, may be positively influenced as a result. Before explaining these aspects of mentorship, I will elaborate on social learning theory.

In his Social Learning Theory (SLT), Bandura (2003) claimed learning occurs when an observer's behavior changes after viewing a behavioral model. This theory is what supports the concept that educational initiatives of mentoring increase promotion of literacy and education. Bandura, who has presented extensive work on the SLT, supports the idea that social incentives push people to exert more effort based upon exhibited behavior of others in small groups or organizations. A link is present between SLT and the mentorship effectiveness in promoting literacy and positive educational practices. In his study, Bandura (2003) analyzes:

464 older adolescents, (14 to 19 years at Time 1; 16 to 21 years at Time 2) tested the structural paths of influence through which perceived self-efficacy for affect regulation operates in concert with perceived behavioral efficacy in governing diverse spheres of psychosocial functioning. (p. 769)

The SLT applies to both mentor and mentee. By using mentorship and addressing the needs of adolescent Black males, preservice teachers participating in service learning projects can effectively influence literacy habits. Bandura (2003) defined self-efficacy as:

the belief in one's ability to succeed in specific situations or accomplish a task which affects how one approaches goals, tasks, and challenges. Therefore, self-efficacy to regulate positive and negative affect is accompanied by high efficacy to manage one's academic development, to resist social pressures for antisocial activities, and to engage oneself with empathy in others' emotional experiences. (p. 769)

Equally, preservice teachers who are aware of these mentorship needs should become sensitive student-centered educators.

Intrinsic qualities are necessary for educational development. Self-esteem, which is an important factor in student success, is one of those qualities and is defined as success divided by pretensions. In other words, feelings of self-worth come from the successes an individual achieves tempered by what the person had expected to achieve (Osborne, 2013). The definition of academic identity, not to be confused with self-efficacy, is not as precise. For the purposes of this study, academic identity will be viewed as a student's personal view of their self-worth or self-perception because of their prospects of success and failure educationally. The differences among self-efficacy, self-esteem, and academic identity is that self-efficacy determines how individuals approach any task; self-esteem is an individual's personal perception of self-worth because of the culmination of a person's life experiences, and academic-identity is evaluated because of

educational success or lack thereof. The connection among these three aspects of personal perception is compounded in the identity of Black males because of this groups complex societal personas. Historically, the Black male has been enslaved, denied education, and systemically vilified; therefore, mentorship offers its own salvation of sorts.

Education and the promotion of self-esteem could affect involvement in many other practices. By producing an example that is positive and attentive, the hope is that the mentee will emulate positive social practices. The SLT supports the idea that social incentives are the catalysts to exert more effort based upon exhibited behavior of other individuals. With the explanation of this framework, I will link SLT to mentoring effectiveness in promoting literacy and positive educational practices because of service learning projects led by preservice teachers.

Limitations of the Study

This study is limited by my ability to relate to the preservice teacher's potential bias. As a college educator, I am familiar with working with students of all populations, but as a Black male, I am sensitive to social bias. However, I feel that unbiased analysis of data is achievable. The findings of this study will only apply to the individuals used in this study and this may be a threat to external validity (Creswell, 2014).

Gender impacts the study because of the lack of representation of men. Participants were female, and it is possible that a male perspective would have given greater contrast of ideas and experiences. Although doubtful, it is possible that gender could make a difference in the perspective of how teachers relate to at risk youth. An

added limitation may be that COVID-19 restrictions may have impacted involvement by potential participants in this study. Potential participants were difficult to access because of displacement and disruptive protocols.

Delimitations of the Study

The goal of this study was to determine how preservice teachers were affected by interaction with Black youths in a college based, critical service learning project. The preservice teachers involved must be in their junior or senior year of their collegiate educational programs. All preservice teachers involved must attend the same university.

Assumptions

The study was based upon the assumption that these preservice teachers have experienced implicit bias. It is also assumed that the participants in the study were honest in their responses.

Definition of Terms

Throughout this paper, certain terms were used and operationally defined for clarity.

Afrocentric – refers to material that concentrates on ideals referred to as African, African American or Black as it relates with subject matter (Grant, 2008).

Academic Readiness – refers to the preparedness a student has acquired that allows them to be equipped for educational advancement (Barnes, Slate, & Rojas-LeBouef, 2010).

Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy – seeks to perpetuate and foster—to sustain—linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism as part of the democratic project of schooling (Paris, 2012).

Implicit Bias – refers to the idea that people have conscious and unconscious attitudes that affect their understanding, actions and treatment of others. This affects a person's ability to be unbiased (Glock & Karbach, 2015).

Mentorship – refers to those who teach mentees meaningful activities designed to transfer values, knowledge, attitudes, and skills that create an unbroken chain of traditions within their cultural group (Biggs, Musewe & Harvey, 2014).

Preservice Teacher – refers to an individual who is currently enrolled in a teacher education program, seeking licensure to teach by developing skills and applying learned pedagogy that will be effective upon graduating the program making preservice teacher a competent professional (Page, Rudney, & Marxen, 2004).

Self-Efficacy – refers to the belief that an individual has his own strengths, weaknesses and this determines how a person approaches any task (Bandura, 2012).

Service Learning Project – refers to a project that approaches teaching and learning in a way that allows students to use academic knowledge and skills to address genuine community needs (Kendall, 1990; Pollack, 1999).

Organization of Remaining Chapters

This dissertation is comprised of five chapters. Chapter I is the introduction of the study in which I discussed the importance of education and the influences that urged me to pursue research of preservice teachers. The quality education and early exposure to

diverse populations of students can dramatically change how at-risk youth are educated. Chapter II is the Review of the Literature and includes scholarly information which addresses the importance of mentorship, preservice teacher preparation and literacy with relation to at-risk youth, especially Black males. In addition, Chapter II includes studies by emerging theorist of scholarly research reflecting information on critical service learning; Chapter III is Methodology. This chapter reflects the procedures used to analyze how preservice teachers participating in a service learning project are affected by tutoring and mentoring at-risk youth in an after-school program. Chapter IV and Chapter V includes the findings and responses of the participants in the study along with themes generated by their responses to questions asked by the researcher; and Chapter VI provides summary, discussion, implications, and recommendations for future studies. Chapter VI will also include results of analysis of the research from the study.

CHAPTER II

Review of Related Literature

What is the purpose of education if not to benefit the world around you?

Weidman et al. (2015) reported students often forget that education can be used for more than developing career skills. Preservice teachers can be exposed to experiences that make them better teachers. Service learning projects can be the answer to assist in preservice teachers' growth by giving them experience with at-risk youth before entering the classroom as a certified teacher. Certain projects resemble or can be equated to mentoring programs depending on the populations that are serve and the intended outcomes. These projects include students that take part in an activity that benefits the community and involves an academic component. The mentors, or preservice teachers for the purpose of this study, are important pieces of the puzzle who can positively affect at-risk youth while serving in service learning projects.

Preservice Teacher Preparation

Hollins (2015) affirmed that teachers who understand and are aware of the environments from which a student comes are more effective in providing high-quality opportunities for learning. Thus, when dealing with at-risk youth, effective teaching and teacher preparation have broader impacts on the quality of life for students when they become adults. Far too often, teachers who have been well trained in pedagogy, have not been trained in the understanding of various communities. Zygmunt-Fillwalk et al. (2010) declared teacher education has trained preservice teachers in the concept of "guerilla teaching" which is defined as "going into unfamiliar schools, briefly depositing limited

content to children whom they have never met and testing theory in the absence of even basic understanding of community in which the school is situated” (p. 54).

Preservice teaching is a phase of collegiate educational programs that could be viewed as the most important aspect of the preservice teacher’s matriculation. Also referred to as student teaching, a student enrolled in a College of Education enters the classroom under the direction of an established teaching professional. The purpose of student teaching is to allow preservice teachers to develop skills and apply learned pedagogy that will be effective upon graduation, becoming a competent, confident professional educator. These preservice teachers come prepared with several years of pedagogy, but the challenges grades 4-8 students present are constantly changing and the number of seasoned teachers as well to assist in the education of the preservice teacher according to Townsend (2007). Page et al. (2004) acknowledged that preservice teacher candidate preparation and interactions of participants have changed over time. Page et al. (2004) stated, “The realization that individuals bring multiple experiences and perspectives to the classroom in turn problematizes the expectation that all program graduates will leave with the same, normative understandings demanded by the increased emphasis on professional standards for beginning teachers” (p.26). The authors revealed that two of the participants who had the most difficulty struggled with “teachability.”

Page et al. (2004) explained that differences and commonalities revealed personal growth as it related to perspectives. Tasks such as planning, preparation, professionalism and self-evaluation affected the preservice candidate’s ability to focus on student learning. One participant of the study initially suffered with putting forward initiative and

discussed how he was changed for the better. The participant stated that he participated in an intensive, cross-cultural experience that gave him confidence and increased his motivation and dedication to teaching. In the experience, he was challenged to meet the needs of young students and felt supported by his university supervisors, his peers, and his cooperating teacher (Rudney & Marxen, 2004, p. 33). The overall result was that interaction with a mixture of cultures, as well as positive reinforcement, benefitted preservice teachers.

In a mixed method research design, Mboka (2012) analyzed the academic preparation of preservice teachers. As student-mentors, the preservice teachers were involuntarily involved in a joint service-learning program sponsored by the criminal justice department of a university in the western part of the United States and a local school district. Mboka (2012) reported while there was potential for beneficial growth on the part of the student-mentors and the at-risk youth, data reflected that most student-mentors experienced professional, logistical, and bureaucratic impediments. Further, Mboka (2012) suggested the success of university-sponsored school-based service learning projects that target at-risk youth may depend largely on how well student-mentors are logistically, academically, and bureaucratically prepared as well as the degrees of commitment by both university and local school authorities toward easing some of the obvious difficulties student-mentors encounter.

Expanding views about diversity, Castro (2010) revealed the influence of issues relating to cultural diversity on preservice teachers who are millennials. Speaking of contrasting views of preservice teachers on issues of cultural diversity from 1985 to 2007,

he indicated that millennial preservice teachers possessed more positive attitudes about teaching culturally diverse students (Castro, 2010). The article suggested that whereas persistent issues of misunderstandings persist, there was a feeling that progress was being made.

Supporting the need for preservice teachers to work with cultural differences, Fitts and Gross (2012) discussed the growth of preservice teachers as it relates to beliefs, attitudes, and school age learners in relation to early field experience involvement in service learning projects. They examined multiple suggestions for the development of preservice teachers such as a learning a second language in addition to taking increased action to develop experiences with culturally diverse student population. The authors mentioned the positive aspects of service learning projects and collected data from an after school tutoring program in an effort to analyze preservice teachers over a three-year period. The article reflects that preservice teachers developed positive relationships with the participants in the program, learned to have a greater appreciation for cultural differences, and developed insight into the children's academic strengths and weaknesses (Fitts & Gross, 2012).

To ensure competency development prior to advancing to the next levels of education, Lambeth and Smith (2016) analyzed teacher preparation of students who had already matriculated through an undergraduate program of study. The belief was that the study would yield data from the unique perspective of graduate level preservice teachers. The study participants were 21 graduate preservice teachers, and they were asked questions to determine perceptions of teaching in a culturally responsive classroom and to

critique their preparation. More specifically, the researchers wanted to know what kind of support do Caucasian preservice teachers feel they need to teach students of color? Also, how do they apply what they have learned in their teaching practice? The findings of the study concluded that preservice teachers “believe that they are responsible for getting to know students’ interest, personalities, and connecting with them” and “that they must demonstrate belief in the student’s abilities” (p. 52). However, several participants admitted to having a limited understanding of culturally responsive teaching. The study also reflected a belief that preservice teachers need to be taught more culturally responsible strategies in their educational programs and have their mentors demonstrate these strategies. A unique aspect of what this study reflected was that criticism of a lack of multicultural training was not generically placed on the higher educational institutional programs, but on the mentors. In essence, the students need more support from their university faculty, mentors, and university.

As researchers continue to inquire about multi-cultural education for preservice teachers, Brady and Esmail (2019) contended there is not a consistent practice of preparing preservice teachers for diverse populations. They use the term “mono-ethnic background” in their study to reflect the large number of preservice teachers who are white and middle class that may have had multicultural training but lack the cultural understanding to maximize effective teaching practices. Their study analyzes the perceptions of teachers about the lack of multi-cultural education for preservice teachers. Findings revealed there were no fears or biases towards diversity training. In addition, the preservice teachers acknowledged that changes were necessary in higher educational

institutional programs to adequately prepare preservice teachers to teach culturally diverse students.

According to Lindo et al. (2018) a service learning project that took a different approach to a familiar concept. In their study, Lindo et al. (2018) used non-education major students from an area college to tutor underperforming students in grades K-6. Their goal was to determine whether tutors without prior classroom instruction and/or teaching experience could improve student reading outcomes with minimal training, a structured reading curriculum, and access to ongoing coaching (Lindo et al., 2018). Their study reflected positive growth among the students, which may be attributed to the involvement by college individuals, like preservice teachers, making an effort to understand and reach at-risk youth.

Preservice Teachers as Mentors

Maddamsetti (2018) examined the benefits of preservice teachers serving as mentors in the development of educational skills in the student. According to Maddamsetti (2018), preservice teachers that assume this mentorship role bring about positive influence, learning, and growth. Often, a mentor must possess the skills to fill a variety of roles. A mentor is a teacher, an advisor, and more importantly, someone who is not judgmental. Mentors teach mentees meaningful activities designed to transfer values, knowledge, attitudes, and skills that create an unbroken chain of traditions within their cultural group (Biggs et al., 2014). The task of being a mentor seems relatively simple by suggestion but being a nurturing role model for others to allow them the opportunity to be successful by setting a positive example is an enormous task (Lim &

Park, 2016, p. 658). Being a mentor creates a fragile balance with a multitude of factors associated with helping others become positive, productive members of society. If students have issues in school, they may have developed insecurities that create challenges in establishing trusting relationships. Considering the complex needs of some young adults who lack personal stability, many factors contribute to the academic and emotional deficiencies of many adolescent at-risk males. Keller (2008) reported that “youth mentoring is characterized by a personal relationship in which a caring individual provides consistent companionship, support, and guidance aimed at developing the competence and character of a child or adolescent” (p. 23). For this study, the mentors will be referred to as preservice teachers. The expectations are that the students will be positively influenced socially and educationally.

Another potential benefit of a service learning program is the impact it has on education and literacy. In American culture, the successful development of educational literacy habits means more than words on a page or books in a library.

At-Risk Youth, Stereotypes and Literacy

Bulger and Watson (2006) explained that an at-risk youth is a child who is less likely to transition successfully into adulthood. This transition to adulthood may be difficult because of economic hardships, educational difficulty, or other negatively contributing factors. Literacy is the important factor that can change the trajectory of such a student. Literacy is defined as the ability to read or write as well as competence or knowledge in a specific area. Literacy can also illuminate the power relationships in society and encourage those individuals who are critically literate to participate in and

use literacy to change dominant power structures to liberate those individuals who are opposed by them (Freire & Macedo, 1987). What the change in the dominant power structure means to at-risk youth is that effectively mastering literacy is the way to create equal educational and social justice. Opportunities and societal influence are earned by those individuals who learn to use advantages of literacy development. However, it is not that at-risk youth do not see literacy's importance, they have issues with relatability.

Service Learning Projects and Preservice Teachers

The National and Community Service Act of 1990 defined service learning as experiences that foster structured learning through organized participation in activities that address community needs (Kendall, 1990; Pollack, 1999). Tinkler, Erickson, and Jagla (2013) ask the question, why service-learning now? The answer is simply if not now, when? If not preservice teachers, who? Preservice teachers are some of the world's most valuable assets. Young people who have committed to a life of service must be given the tools to be effective and useful to others. One of those tools is the experience of service learning. There are many aspects of service learning and the projects created as a result. Ultimately, the goal of this study is to benefit preservice teachers, students and researchers by focusing on the enhanced capabilities of the preservice teacher. Tinkler et al. (2013) maintained that service learning has "transformative aspects" and that learning the pedagogy of service learning can enhance civic and cultural understanding for preservice teachers.

Consistently, researchers assert the importance of preservice teachers' engagement in service learning projects. For example, Rama et al. (2000) demonstrated

how service learning projects effected student intellectual skills and personal outcomes. Their expectation was that service learning projects help students, other individuals, and those who lend their efforts to the service learning project like preservice teachers. Berno, Kuleza, and Ridgway (2017) developed a college course that focused on the concept of service learning projects to help engage students in applying the scientific process to real world issues.

Additionally, Maguth and Makki (2013) acknowledged that exposing preservice teachers to service learning projects is an opportunity to engage students in the idea of global citizenship. Preservice teachers in this study were asked to develop an interdisciplinary approach to fostering a global perspective. Working across content areas, the purpose of this project was to help preservice teachers develop a wider cultural perspective to ensure that their teaching capabilities would be enhanced by navigating from a different perspective.

Likewise, Brown (2005) examined the effects of service learning on the multicultural perceptions, cross-cultural communication skills, and the social justice cognizance of future teachers. Using 73 preservice teachers in an alternative certification program, Brown (2005) established informative findings. Brown (2005) suggested that service learning programs provided teachers with insight, increased proficiency with culturally diverse students, and increased effectiveness.

In an effort to understand the influence of service learning projects, Stenhouse and Jarret (2012) used Shor's (1992) empowering pedagogy to develop the Problem Solution Project which created research to impact teacher preparation and student

outcomes. Shor's (1992) critical pedagogy approach educates teachers by using a problem posing framework meant to challenge current teacher education practices. Service-learning intentionally advances knowledge, skills, and dispositions relevant to subject matter within an established curriculum (Stenhouse & Jarrett, 2012). Using multicultural and interdisciplinary characteristics, Stenhouse and Jarrett (2012) developed a service learning project that taught preservice teachers' different methods of critical thinking and problem solving that would be transferred to the classroom and ultimately benefitting students. The intent of the PSP was to develop preservice teachers as agents of change while teaching them decision-making, group dynamics, community needs, and how to help solve issue of concern.

Critical Service Learning Project

Critical service learning or CSL as it has been referred to, evolved out of the concept of service learning because of an increasing need for effective change in areas such as, but not limited to, education. Inequities relative to social equality among races and between genders produce an uneven distribution of social justice in other areas that impact education of at-risk youth. In her report, Mitchell (2008) explained the difference between traditional service learning and the idea of critical service learning. Mitchell stated, "service learning has emerged on college university campuses as an effective practice to enhance student learning and development" (p. 51). She also agreed in contrast with the assessment by Neurer and Rhoads (1998) that "to suggest that all forms of community service equally develop an ethic of care, a flowering of a mature identity, and advance our understanding of community is misleading" (p. 329). She credited her

introduction to the concept of critical service to Rhoads in 1997. Mitchell also credited Rice and Pollack (2000) and Rosenburger (2000) for their academic emphasis to critical service learning. Mitchell stated, “critical service-learning programs encourage students to see themselves as agents of social change and use the experience of service to address and respond to injustice in communities” (p. 51). In supporting her position, she used Wade’s (2001) view of traditional service learning as service to individuals and the idea of critical service learning as a service to an ideal (2001).

More relative to purpose of this study, Tinkler and Tinkler (2016), discuss the topic of cultural humility by using critical service learning in teacher preparation. They support the idea that preservice teachers must recognize the prejudices and biases they bring to their classroom. According to Porfilio and Hickman (2011), “critical service-learning is a political project, embedded with a social justice orientation with a commitment to guiding students to develop the skills, ideas, and attributes necessary to foster equity and freedom in K–12 schools” (p.192). Tinkler and Tinkler (2016) report the goal of their preparation of preservice teachers by using critical service learning programs was to “develop a sequence of experiences that prompted preservice teachers to seek to create change” (p.192).

Iyera et al. (2015) also made the assertion that critical service learning is important in the preparation of educators. They argued that a critical service-learning connection further refines the goals of service-learning (2015). By using a questioning that contrast the elements of service learning and critical service learning, the researchers analyzed a conceptual understanding of both concepts by future educators. Because of the

need to transform theory and ideology into practice, the study is assessing the values and enterprising skills of future educators. The themes that emerged from the results were that the future educators possessed a value of social responsibility, inclusivity, and appreciation of diversity.

Establishing pathways progressing past traditional service-learning to a greater understanding and implementation of CSL, Latta et al. (2018) addressed the possibilities of critical service learning emerging from continued research. They were attempting to address questions such as (1) What are CSL, critical theory, and positionality, and how do the three intersect?, (2) How does one identify their own positionality, and how would one help students discover their positionality?, and (3) What tools and resources are best suited in facilitating practitioner movement from a traditional service-learning perspective toward a CSL orientation? In their article, they too give Mitchell credit for establishing of the concept of CSL and distinguishing between the traditional forms of service learning and CSL pedagogy (2018).

According to Ehrlich and Jacoby (2009), there are those who feel critical service learning has lived up to its potential. On the other hand, Butin (2015) feels communities that critical service learning desires to assist have not been as positively impacted as they could be. He argued that service learning is a powerful tool to engage students in supporting communities but suggest that the purpose of critical service learning may be a dream that is unfulfilled. In addition, he suggests that many of the students involved in critical service learning projects do not embrace the purpose with the same veracity of the

intent of purpose. In other words, educators would be better served by changing their desired outcomes to more realistic pursuits.

Noting the dangers of critical service learning, Andrews and Leonard (2018) asserted that the emphasis put on social commitment or social change may be characterized or dismissed as activism or as too political. Research from the study found:

“critical service-learning in a professional development school offers the opening for practicing educators, university students, and university faculty to develop critical consciousness, tackle authentic issues in light of social awareness of the root causes of those issues, and engage in professional learning as teacher-researchers that encompasses critical reflection, analysis, and action.” (p. 11)

Mentoring and Preservice Teacher

According to Darling et al. (2006), mentoring needs are organized around four topics, which include: (a) a program’s documented effectiveness; (b) the extent to which mentor, youth, and program characteristics influence effectiveness; (c) the processes that link mentoring to outcomes in youth; and (d) the extent to which efforts to provide mentoring have reached and engaged these youth, have been implemented with high quality, and have been adopted and sustained by host organizations and settings.

Different types of mentors and programs are available. To ensure effective leadership and mentorship, mentoring programs cannot be developed with the philosophy that one-size-fits-all. Mentorship program information provided by Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri, indicated that several types of programs, with various options for each type, exist. The first type of program is formal mentorship that includes: (a) structured

programs frequently match mentors and trainee, (b) formats vary by program, (c) generally focused on specific goals, and (d) provides accountability based on formal contracts between mentor and trainee (WU, 2006). The second type of program is natural mentorship, such as programs: (a) initiated by mentor – one person (usually senior) reaching out to another, and (b) Initiated implicitly – usually people with much in common (WU, 2016). The third type of program is peer mentoring, consisting of: (a) individuals at the same level providing skill training, (b) individuals in similar positions (e.g., have small children) providing support, empathy, and advice, and (c) individuals in similar stage of career mentoring on options and career goals. The fourth type of program is situational mentoring that: (a) involve mentoring for a specific purpose/skill, (b) are generally short-term, and (c) are common at all stages of the career. The fifth type of program is supervisory mentorship involving: (a) advisor as mentor and direct supervisor – “many hats,” (b) discomfort by some supervisors who are not comfortable being a mentor, and (c) the possibility of conflict of interest. The sixth type of program is trainee-initiated mentorship that begins with an interaction with a chosen mentor, which may develop into a mentoring relationship (WU, 2016).

Certain types of mentoring programs serve as extensions to the educational system and provide the added benefit of academic resources in addition to effective leadership. Many mentoring programs serve as potential cultural groups, but all are directed toward at-risk youth. One such mentoring program is Harlem Children’s Zone (HCZ). Although not affiliated with a college service learning project, programs, such as HCZ, mirror the intended effect by preservice teachers and college programs. Founded

in New York City in 1970 under the name Rheedlen Centers for Children and Families, the mentorship program changed its name to the Harlem Children's Zone in 2002 (Williams & Wiggan, 2017). The HCZ began as a neighborhood pilot mentoring program, and it has flourished into an organization that has helped thousands of people make positive changes in their lives, including changing the personal trajectories of children and young adults (2017). Harlem Children's Zone promotes their program based upon five core principles. The first core principle is to serve an entire neighborhood comprehensively and at scale to create a tipping point and definitively shift the culture of the community. The second core principle requires mentors to create a pipeline of coordinated, best-practice programs to give children and families seamless support from birth through college and maximize their outcomes. Using the third core principle, a mentor should build community among residents, institutions, and stakeholders to create a healthy, positive environment where children can thrive. The fourth core principle suggests the mentors should evaluate program outcomes and create a feedback loop to provide managers with real-time data to strengthen services. The fifth core principle urges mentors to cultivate an organizational culture of success rooted in passion, accountability, leadership, and teamwork according to Dobbie and Fryer (2015). Harlem Children's Zone serves a largely minority population that is comprised of Hispanic and Black students (2015). Dobbie and Fryer (2015) conducted a study to analyze the effects of high performing charter programs on human capital, risky behaviors, and healthy outcomes. They noted that HCZ placed emphasis on recruiting high quality teachers for afternoon tutorial programs and used extensive data driven

monitoring to track student progress. Dobbie and Fryer (2015) reported that overall, students scored higher in reading and math assessments as compared to public school programs. The findings revealed that males were 4.4 percentage points less likely to be incarcerated as result of the effective programs and leadership associated with programs like those offered by Harlem Children's Zone.

Another mentoring program, My Brother's Keeper, also known as MBK, is a mentoring initiative created by the Obama administration to offer assistance to at-risk youth. According to Barbarin (2015), this mentoring program has now been transitioned into a separate 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization known as the My Brother's Keeper Alliance and will merge with the Obama Foundation. Founded in 2014, the expectation of the initiative was that by increasing school attendance, educational outcomes, such as literacy, will increase. Although the program focused more on absenteeism, the mission was and is still important even in the post Obama era (Barbarin, 2015). At its inception, students were to receive resources from participating schools as well as the community. Mentorship is still at the core of My Brother's Keeper Alliance, and the program is enhanced by data that targets the needs of students who need role models in their lives (Barbarin, 2015). The program, founded upon six strategic objectives established by MBK administrators, intended to help Black and other minority males to: (1) enter kindergarten with the cognitive, physical, and socioemotional competencies needed for success at school; (2) read at grade level by third grade; (3) graduate from high school; (4) complete postsecondary education or training; (5) achieve full employment; and (6) remain safe from violent crime (Barbarin, 2015). Although research will continue to be

accessible as the initiative continues, the benefits for Black males is that MBK provides support and beneficial resources while gathering data that will aid in creating effective strategies.

Summary

In chapter two, I presented the literature review related to the impact of critical service learning projects on preservice teachers. The literature concentrated on preservice teachers serving as mentors and role models in the development of educational skills in the student. As effectively stated by Dallimore and Souza (2002), “The interface between experience, community service, and subject matter prepares students to become concerned, considerate, and connected members of society” (p. 94). When preservice teachers engage regularly in critical service-learning experiences, they help to foster the development of positive attitudes toward work and the community. One advantage of preservice teacher involvement in culturally sustaining service-learning projects on a college campus is teachers can enhance civic and cultural understanding.

Chapter 3 will report the methodology used in this study. The discussion in the chapter 3 is divided into the following five sections: 1) Research Design, 2) Population; 3) Data Collection Procedures; 4) Data Analysis; and 5) Summary.

CHAPTER III

Methodology

In this qualitative case study, I explored how preservice teachers participating in a service learning project are affected by tutoring and mentoring at-risk youths in an after-school program. The changing ethnic dynamic of public-school classrooms has created the need for culturally inclusive teaching strategies to prepare preservice teachers for 21st century classrooms. The purpose of this qualitative study was to evaluate how preservice teachers are affected by involvement in culturally sustaining service-learning projects on a college campus. Qualitative researchers use deep, wide angle lens, examining human choice and behavior as it occurs naturally in all its detail (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). I analyzed the individual preservice teacher experience with at-risk youth in a college-based service learning project. The advantages of analyzing data using constant-comparative analysis study derive from the ability to compare reactions of participants and to be able to generalize the results from multiple cases while sustaining demonstrated reliability when used in the field of education (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). Preservice teachers who are involved in service learning projects that include varying cultures and ethnicities of at-risk youth have a unique opportunity.

Research Questions

The research questions answered are: (a) What are the perceptions of preservice teachers about working with at-risk youths in an afterschool program? (b) How can teacher preparation programs use critical service learning projects to prepare preservice teachers for the diverse classroom?

Research Design

A qualitative approach was used for the formation of this study. Qualitative research includes eight steps, which are: (a) selecting a topic, (b) determining research questions, (c) designing the study, (d) collecting data, (e) analyzing data, (f) generating findings, (g) validating findings, and (h) writing the report (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). A qualitative design was the most useful because it provided an opportunity for the participants to discuss their involvement in the service learning project. This study is situated in an interpretive naturalistic setting where “human behavior is significantly influenced by the setting in which it occurs” (Bogden & Biklen, 2007, p. 5). This study used a convenience sampling method and participants were preservice teachers involved in an after-school program that serve an adolescent at-risk population. Because the participants volunteered for the program, they were easily accessible.

Multiple-case study research design was selected for this study (Creswell, 2014). Regardless of race, these preservice teachers are a part of an educational culture that may have been affected by implicit bias. To understand implicit bias, preservice teachers completed a questionnaire at the beginning and end of the program to discuss experiences and reactions to their involvement in the service learning project to assess how they have been impacted, including the educational literacy impact of the students. In addition, the interview method was used for this study. Because of the need for qualitative evaluation, open-ended questions were used to interview participants. By reviewing significant statements and allowing participants to discuss their experience stated in the interviews,

data was interpreted from the participants to understand if and how they are impacted by implicit bias.

Validation methods were used to ensure trustworthiness, and credibility (Johnson & Christensen, 2014).

Recruiting

An email was sent to the participants who had participated a critical service learning project. A recruitment email was created and shared with potential participants. If they agreed to participate, a follow-up email was sent with a consent form and a demographic survey to be completed.

Students expressing an interest in the study were asked to acknowledge and confirm they met the research criteria and sign informed consent documents provided by the researcher. If they agreed to participate, a second email was sent with a consent form and a demographic survey to be completed.

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, interviews were conducted via Zoom meetings. The interviews lasted approximately 30 minutes and were audio recorded. The audio recordings were transcribed verbatim and specific information was removed to protect the identity of the participants. I utilized a transcription software program, REV to convert audio files into text. I sent emails to participants to participate for member checking.

Participants

The participants of the study were comprised of teachers who once were preservice teachers involved critical service learning program while seeking certification in grades 4-8. The primary focus was placed on how the teachers, when serving as preservice teachers, were impacted by their interaction and tutoring of these at-risk students. They not only served in an educational capacity but in a mentoring role as well. The participants varied by ethnicity and were in the later stages of their educational programs when involved in the critical service learning project. Participants ranged in age from 20 to 23 and the mentees were students whose ages ranged from 10 to 13 and from diverse backgrounds.

Adolescent students who participated were used for this study because of the importance of potential data from analyzing this developmental period. Of the students involved in this study, some were children of parents who work extended hours, which created the need for after school care. Some have had discipline problems during school and were placed in mentoring programs as a form of punishment. Students ranged in ages from 8 to 14. The common thread is that these young adolescent students need positive role models as opposed to examples that provide more negative options.

Data for this multiple case study were collected from (2) teachers. Six students were randomly chosen from the respondents, but due to circumstances, only two were used for this study. To assure anonymity, the teachers interviewed were given identifiers to ensure anonymity. Students were chosen from an education program at a Tier-II public university in southeast Texas.

Data Collection

Data collection began following the approval of the dissertation committee and the Institutional Review Board. An invitation was sent to preservice teachers to participate in the study. Questionnaires were used for gathering “information about thoughts, feelings, attitudes, beliefs, values, perceptions, personality and behavioral intentions of research participants” (Johnson & Christensen, 2012, p.192). Those who agreed to participate were given a questionnaire to complete before and after the observational period. In person interviews were conducted at the end of the evaluation period, and observations.

Personal interviews included open-ended questions for preservice teachers that allowed the participants to reflect on their thoughts, beliefs, knowledge, reasoning, motivations, and feelings about the service learning project, the at-risk students involved, and how they may have been impacted by their involvement.

The qualitative observation portion of the study involved the researcher observing relevant phenomena while reviewing any field notes. The observations were naturalistic observations and the researcher record the entire interview.

Participant Characteristics

To understand the perspective of these teachers and how working with culturally sustaining service learning project dealt with at-risk youth, interviews were conducted. Initially, these interviews were to be face-to-face. However, changes were made due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, Zoom interviews were conducted and recorded to ensure the safety of the researcher and the participants. These recordings

were stored on a secure server where only the researcher had access. Each participant was asked 13 questions. Transcription began after the interviews were completed.

Confidentiality was maintained by assigning the participants identifiers and not using pseudo names.

A total of three participants were interviewed. Due to COVID-19, four potential participants were unavailable. Of those three participants, one did not meet the criteria used to define eligibility for participation. One participant agreed to be a part of the study but declined efforts to meet via Zoom. The participants interviewed were preservice teachers at the time of their involvement with that critical service-learning project. They are now public-school teachers in Texas. A display of demographic information about these participants in this study is presented in Table 1. Gender, ethnicity, teaching experience and type of school assignment is located within the table.

Table 1

Demographic Information of Participants

Participant	Gender	Ethnicity	Grade Level	Teaching Exp.
1. D1	Female	White	Middle	Less than 2 years
2. K2	Female	Black	Middle	Less than 2 years

Participant one, also identified as D1, was a middle public-school teacher with less than 2 years of classroom experience. Prior to her receiving an educational assignment, she was a student in a public college in Texas. D1, as a participant in this

study is qualified because of her interaction with at-risk youth as a result of working with a critical service-learning project while training as a preservice teacher.

Participant two, identified as K2, was a middle public-school teacher with less than 2 years of classroom experience as well. Prior to her receiving an educational assignment, she was also a student in a public college in Texas. As a participant K2 was qualified based on her interaction with at-risk youth with a critical service-learning project while training as a preservice teacher.

Originally four participants agreed to be a part of the study however, due to undisclosed reasons, one potential participant discontinued communication and one participant did not meet the criteria for participation.

Data Analysis

The constant comparative method was used in collecting and analyzing data for this study, and because of the use of multiple-case study, theoretical sensitivity was prioritized to ensure that necessary criteria are met (i.e. fit, understanding, generality, and control). Open coding, axial coding, and selective coding was used to analyze the data. A transcript of the interviews with D1 and K2 was transcribed for analysis. I increased my familiarity with the data and enhanced my ability to find connections or themes that emerged from this research by analyzing each line of text from the interviews. Because interviews occurred independently, it was important to present the data as separate findings so readers can gain a sense that each case was unique to itself. Each participant was given a dedicated chapter. After presenting all of these interviews, I then identified similarities, themes, or ideas that emerged from the data. Several descriptive codes were

identified, and themes were identified from the inductive analysis of the transcripts. Each line of the interview transcript was evaluated to identify the frequency of particular words and phrases.

Table 2

Emerging Themes

Theme	Description	Significant Statement
Environment	Surroundings, conditions where a person operates	“we must create a safe environment”
Diversity	A range of different social and ethnic backgrounds, genders, and sexual orientations	“a culturally diverse class group was children coming from different parts of life, even from their color of their skin to their, to their religion”
Expectation	A belief that someone will or should achieve something	“the idea of failing and students failing is not an option”
Mentorship	“The activity of giving a younger person or less experienced person help and advice over a period of time”	“I’m a teacher, but I’m also someone that kind of mentors them through life”

Summary

Preservice teachers are an important part of the educational system. Their role as educator will impact a student for years to come. Because many lack exposures to different ethnicities, the opportunity for implicit bias can occur. College campus-based service learning projects could positively impact the effectiveness of preservice teachers upon graduation. Therefore, the study of the interaction between at-risk youth and preservice teachers will produce information that will be useful post 2019. With that being said, the impact that a single teacher can have on a student's life is immeasurable.

CHAPTER IV

Results

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore how preservice teachers are affected by involvement in culturally sustaining service-learning projects on a college campus by tutoring and mentoring at-risk youths in an after-school program. The interviews from this study were analyzed to give preservice and former preservice teachers the opportunity to give perspective on their experiences working with at-risk youth. In addition, the purpose of this study was also to evaluate how preservice teachers were impacted by involvement in a culturally-sustaining service learning project.

The following research questions were used to guide this study: (a) What are the perceptions of preservice teachers about working with at-risk youths in an afterschool program? (B) How can teacher preparation programs use critical service learning projects to prepare preservice teachers for the diverse classroom?

Interview Responses

All interviews were conducted during the month of July 2020. Due to restrictions put in place due to COVID-19, interviews were conducted via Zoom to ensure the safety of participants and the researcher.

Interview Question 1. What do you consider as a culturally diverse class group?

D1 answered that “a classroom that has many different students from many different backgrounds.” She did not refer to ethnicity in her answer.

Interview Question 2. What do you think it means to be culturally aware? In an effort to not misunderstand, D1 asked if I were referring to the public-school classroom

or the college classroom. Her answer was that she should be aware, even if the students were from the same town, that they all might have different cultural backgrounds.

Interview Question 3. Describe what you think a teacher's role is as it relates to students? D1 offered a two-part explanation for her answer. First, she stated, "I think the role is the teacher and that's the umbrella. And everything underneath it is everything we're doing. I mean we're a mentor to them sometimes. Sometimes they need a friend. I mean, obviously we're the teacher and we need to teach them. We need to help them learn." In the second part of her response, she stated "I think one of the biggest roles our teachers have to these students is to create a safe environment for the students however you can" ... sometimes, you need to be a mediator. Sometimes our students will have fights and, or not fights. But you know, disagreements in our class and so we'll need to step in and be the mediator."

Interview Question 4. How does that role change when dealing with at-risk students? D1 stated that it simply adds another title under the umbrella. She reflected that students still must feel that they have a safe space and that it's simply part of the vocation of being a teacher.

Interview Question 5. How do you think that months dedicated to different cultures in the public-school system will impact students? What D1 stated is her mother was a teacher as well and that she saw a contrast between the two environments. Personally, D1 felt that the celebration of months dedicated to different cultures is "amazing". However, as the researcher, I surmise that freedom to express in schools like her mother's school was different from her experience. D1's school is very strict about

what it allows to be placed on wall, thus affecting the expression of certain things such as months dedicated to cultural awareness.

Interview Question 6. How do you think that months dedicated to different cultures will impact you? D1 reported “it would be fun.” I am not certain that she understood the question due to her response. Her response made me think that she was still answering question 5. She elaborated on how when cultural months are celebrated, she included different teaching materials to expose students to a variety of books.

Interview Question 7. Describe yourself as a teacher? D1 stated that she believes in hands on learning. She says that opposed to simply assigning worksheets, she prefers different types of activities and assignments. She wants to make her classroom a fun and safe environment. D1 uses the term ‘safe’ often in her answers to the questions.

Interview Question 8. Describe the level of diversity in your high school growing up? D1 states “It was kind of split between, like, 60, 70%. So probably about 60, 70% would be typical average family. And then probably the other 25, 30% would probably be, not so much your typical average family. I asked D1 what she meant by the “typical average family?” She appears to be somewhat uncomfortable clarifying her answer. She states that she is referring to ethnicity and not economic or family structure. What she states is that there were more ethnically diverse schools in her district growing up, but that was not the case in her high school.

Interview Question 9. How has your training prepared or left you unprepared to deal with culturally diverse populations in the classroom? D1 compares her preservice experience with a critical service learning project to her present situation as a classroom

teacher and states that she feels that she is in fact equipped, but not 100 percent prepared. She states that by having instructors that were of different ethnicities, she is probably more prepared than she would have been without them. Her experience working with the service-learning program as a preservice teacher also assisted in her preparation by providing experience with working with at-risk youth.

Interview Question 10. How would you describe the techniques that you have learned that help with educating students in diverse populations? D1 refers to an assignment given to her by her instructors when she was a preservice teacher. It's called a Cultural X-ray and she states "draw themselves or you get a stick figure. Outside of their stick figure, they draw what matters to them like their dogs, their pets, their PlayStation.... then you have a heart. On this person or around this person, and inside, they put what they truly, truly, matters to them." As a result of this assignment and by using it in her classroom, D1 says that got the opportunity to see what truly matters to these students on a personal level. This allowed her information to connect.

Interview Question 11. What professional /academic organizations do you or did you belong? D1 stated that she was a member of ATPE (Association of Texas Professionals Educators) and AMLE (Association of Middle Level Educators).

Interview Question 12. What is it that you think students can teach you? D1 answered that her students have taught her to not be afraid to challenge them as well as be challenged personally. D1 reflects that being a teacher can make you nervous because the idea of failing and students failing is not an option. Also, step out of the comfort shell.

Interview Question 13. Do you or did you have any concerns about becoming a teacher? D1 stated that she did in fact have concerns. She reflected “I felt like somebody was... like it was just going to be bad. I thought it was just going to be terrible and I just was not going to like the profession. I didn't have a plan B. What was I going to do if I didn't become a teacher? So...”

Discussion

Summary

D1 appeared to be a confident and enthusiastic teacher. What I deduced from her responses to the interview questions was that she wanted to be effective. This was not just a job for her. It is my opinion that her being Black and a woman may have given her a different perspective as how to relate to students of different cultures, sexual orientations, and performance levels. Her responses reflect that she is used to being in environments that have a variety of cultures and ethnicities. This could potentially make her more comfortable with cultural adjustments. However, familiarity alone will not make her effective. What could potentially make her more effective is her willingness to use this experience in a way that develops a productive connection, especially with her at risk students.

CHAPTER V

Results II

The following research questions were used to guide this study: (a) What are the perceptions of preservice teachers about working with at-risk youths in an afterschool program? (B) How can teacher preparation programs use critical service learning projects to prepare preservice teachers for the diverse classroom?

K2 Interview Responses

Interview Question 1. What do you consider as a culturally diverse class group?

K2 stated “a culturally diverse class group was children coming from different parts of life, even from their color of their skin to their, to their religion to whatever else makes them culturally diverse.” In her opinion, there were many aspects of a child’s background that could make them culturally different. K2 referred to race in her answer.

Interview Question 2. What do you think it means to be culturally aware? K2 answered “culturally aware being students that have different backgrounds and that learning from them might be difficult. Being sensitive to the idea that teachers sometimes are not aware of what each student’s experiences have been and that every student may not learn the same way is a priority.” The example that K2 provided was when a student is considered to have done something disrespectful, teachers must ask questions. Is he or she acting this way because of cultural attitudes towards women or education? Or, is it possible that it is a result of something going on at home. Being aware that sometimes cultural or situational differences outside the classroom might be reflected in a student’s behavior.

Interview Question 3. Describe what you think a teacher's role is as it relates to students? K2 stated that her role as a teacher is to be a mentor as well. She says that being there for them academically is only part of the job. Another part is helping them with their decision making and inspiring them to reach their individual potential.

Interview Question 4. How does that role change when dealing with at-risk students? K2 stated that her role does not change. She did not see working with at-risk students as adding more to her list of responsibilities. In addition to working with at-risk students in a service-learning project as a preservice teacher, she presently works at a Title one school. She stated, "You still are their mentor because you want them to see you... I went to school where I did... I didn't stay off the path, I wanted to, but I didn't."

Interview Question 5. How do you think that months dedicated to different cultures in the public-school system will impact students? K2 stated that months dedicated to different cultures does impact students. Students, as well as faculty, will be exposed to other cultures and traditions. K2 felt that months dedicated to different cultures created an opportunity to create respect for other ethnicities by learning different types of history. This world is comprised of by a multitude of histories with different perspectives.

Interview Question 6. How do you think that months dedicated to different cultures will impact you? K2 stated, "I don't. I Guess I see everything... I see everybody in the same way. It makes me respect students even more. It kind of gives me an insight". She uses an example that refers to young males of an ethnicity. She initially felt that she was being disrespected in her classroom. What she says she found out later was that in

this particular culture, women are not held in high regard and that men “see women as invisible”. As a result, she reflected that she had to establish her authority so that she could teach them effectively.

Interview Question 7. Describe yourself as a teacher? K2 stated that “I think one of my strengths is I build a very strong rapport with all of my students. I learn who they are from front to back and I respect them as a person not even just as a student...they have opinions as well and I always listen to that.” She goes on to state that her weakness is the rapport she has with students. She states “it’s a thin line between being a teacher and being a friend.” Students can sometimes forget that she is the authority figure and not a peer.

Interview Question 8. Describe the level of diversity in your high school growing up? K2 states that she went to a very diverse high school. She breaks the matriculation down into three ethnic groups: Black, White, and Hispanic. She also reflected that the majority of her teachers were White in a school where the student body was predominately Black.

Interview Question 9. How has your training prepared or left you unprepared to deal with culturally diverse populations in the classroom? K2, felt that she was well prepared to teach an ethnically diverse population if she had to. She says that her academic preparation and experience in the service-learning project as a preservice teacher taught her to think outside the box as far as creative ideas for engaging all types of students.

Interview Question 10. How would you describe the techniques that you have learned that help with educating students in diverse populations? K2 described a technique that she used with students that she called her NAK's. NAK stood for New Arrival Kids. These were children who had just recently arrived in the country and were placed in her classroom. The technique involves placing these students in a group, isolate a special time during the workday, and giving them specialized instruction to assist in their transition into the school. She would allow them to teach her words from their country so that learning felt more reciprocal. She would then find a point during instruction to incorporate the word into the lesson to make them feel as if they were accepted.

Interview Question 11. What professional /academic organizations do you or did you belong? K2 stated that she was a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. The organization stands as one of the oldest Pan Hellenic Black organizations and includes amongst its members many of the nation's most successful Black women. The oldest sorority in the "Divine Nine" as it is called is Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Incorporated.

Interview Question 12. What is it that you think students can teach you? K2 stated her students have taught her to "think outside the box". She says that they told her that they did not want to do the same thing every day and that they like a variety of things. She also stated that once she took this idea to heart, she began to use new strategies with her students, and their involvement in instruction increased.

Interview Question 13. Do you or did you have any concerns about becoming a teacher? K2 reported her fear was classroom management. She says that her university offered a course in classroom management but was uncertain if it would help when entering the actual classroom. She goes on to reflect on advice that was given to her as a preservice teacher. Her mother told her “When the actual teacher is there and its you’re learning period as a preservice teacher, it is not your actual class. Things will be different when you are the only one in charge”. K2 says that statement stayed with her and that even with her personal confidence and the experience she had as a preservice teacher, “you never know what it's like 'til you step in on that first day”.

Emerging Themes

Using the interview transcriptions, I began the phenomenal data analysis process with horizontalization by looking for significant statements relevant to the experience (Moustakas, 1994). I then created textual descriptions using the significant statements to develop clusters of meaning, identify themes from the participants’ experiences. Then for imaginative variation, I described how the participants experienced the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013; Moustakas, 1994). The participants appeared to be, based on the language displayed in their interviews, teachers who were concerned about their job and the impact their preparedness and relatability has on their students. By identifying reoccurring themes that represented their apparent concerns, codes were able to be identified. The extracted codes were categorized and then combined under a theme. The themes emerged from this study were: environment, diversity, and expectation.

Summary

K2 is also enthusiastic teacher who is following in the footsteps of a parent who is also an educator. What K2 expresses in her responses is that her exposure to different cultures may be somewhat limited. Also, when referring to differences, K2 gave the impression that economics was more of a factor in her understanding of what made a student at risk as opposed to performance level in the classroom. However, her responses do express a strong desire to be effective and understand what the students need educationally and how she can be a mentor as well. Involvement in the critical service learning project may have been more beneficial to her due to the types of students that she presently teaches and her lack of exposure to diverse student population before graduation from college.

CHAPTER VI

Summary, Discussion, Implications, and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to explore how preservice teachers are affected by involvement in culturally sustaining service-learning projects on a college campus, and their preparedness for working with culturally diverse at-risk youth. Findings of this study were detailed in Chapter IV and a summary, discussion of the findings in relation to the research questions, literature, and framework, as well as a discussion of implications for future research and policies and practices are enclosed in Chapter V.

Summary

Preservice teachers are vital members of the educational system. They are at the beginning of their careers and can be taught how to exhibit tolerance and understanding without the danger of having learned bad habits because of frustration and indifference. Preservice teachers are the head of the spear and can make an impact on students that may resonate for years. Personally, there are teachers from my educational journey who's names I will never forget. My remembrance of them was often due to a kind act or thoughtful caring expression of faith in me that resonated with my personality. Other times, and not but a few, my remembrance was due to a callous statement that did not reflect the teacher's sense of awareness to the delicate balance of the relationship between a student and a teacher. What makes this study important is that scholarly research of the preservice teacher can yield benefits that go beyond the quantitative. Their role as educators may influence a student for years to come in ways that cannot be measured. Because many teachers lack exposure to different ethnicities, the opportunity

for implicit bias can occur. College campus-based service learning projects could positively improve the preparation of preservice teachers upon graduation. Therefore, the study of the interaction between at risk students, especially Black adolescent males, and preservice teachers produced information that will be useful after 2021. This

This study provided insightful and useful information for preservice teachers, teachers, administrators, and policy makers. These professionals would benefit from information that aids in their ability to connect with diverse student populations through critical service learning projects. Methods of teaching preservice teachers could also be enhanced to include more effective training relative to issues faced by student diversity. By using information obtained from this study into the perceptions of preservice teachers about working with at-risk youths in an afterschool program, teachers will be able to better design curriculum and develop lessons to work successfully with diverse students. It will also allow for preservice teachers to have a better understanding of educational programs' use of service learning projects to generate ideas that will establish successful strategies when working with students from diverse cultures.

Two preservice teachers seeking certification in grades 4-8 in the later stages of their educational programs and have received a minimum of three years of educational training in Southeast Texas were interviewed using open-ended questions that focused on the following two research questions:

(1) What are the perceptions of preservice teachers about working with at-risk youths in an afterschool program?

(2) How can teacher preparation programs use critical service learning projects to prepare preservice teachers for the diverse classroom?

Discussion of the Findings in Relation to the Research Questions

Three themes emerged from the data collected from the semi-structured individual interviews with the two participants which were: environment, diversity, expectation.

This study was designed to understand the essence of the participants' experiences. How can teacher preparation programs use critical service learning projects to prepare preservice teachers for the diverse classroom?

The current study utilized semi-structured individual interviews, and the themes that emerged are listed below and addressed the research questions: *(a) What are the perceptions of preservice teachers about working with at-risk youths in an afterschool program? (b) How can teacher preparation programs use critical service learning projects to prepare preservice teachers for the diverse classroom?* The themes emerged from this study were: environment, diversity, expectation.

Discussion of Theme 1: Environment

In chapter two, I referred to Hollins (2015) who asserted teachers who understand and are aware of the environments from which a student comes are more effective in providing high-quality opportunities for learning. Thus, when dealing with at-risk youth, effective teaching and teacher preparation have broader impacts on the quality of life for students when they become adults. Because of that impact, the need for preservice teachers to relate and understand to at risk youth is extremely important. The participants in this study describe their experiences with at risk students differently from one another,

but what consistently reflected that the interaction with these students made them more aware of the need for cultural sensitivity and patience. They reflect that many of the students that enter their classrooms are looking for a safe, inclusive environment and these teachers were aware that the development of this atmosphere was their responsibility. Teachers are expected to present an educational environment that is positive, safe and inclusive. By promoting such an atmosphere, trusting relationships will be developed and can assist in learning. The classroom should reflect preparedness by the instructor and encourage interest from students. Relationships between teacher and students also impact learning environment. Students should be able to trust that their teacher will be fair and consistent in her treatment.

D1 felt that she should serve as an “umbrella” for the student and serve as a mentor. She states that she wanted to be a type of friend, but she also wanted to create an environment that was safe. K2 specified she wanted to create an environment that would help them reach their individual potential. K2 also refers to creating a “safe place” for students. Classroom climate is directly correlated to children’s learning outcomes, positive associations with social competence, academic achievement and psychological development (Wang et al., 2020). Chapman et al. (2013) declared classroom climate has emerged as a unifying construct that exemplifies how the combination and accumulation of diverse learning experiences contributes to the development of academic, behavioral, and socioemotional outcomes for children and adolescents.

Discussion of Theme 2: Diversity

Defined as the practice or quality of including or involving people from a range of different social and ethnic backgrounds and of different genders, sexual orientations, etc. Preservice teachers face the possibility of more diverse classrooms that represent many different ethnicities. As a result, culturally relevant teaching will become more of a necessity. However, as there are higher education programs that are not preparing preservice teachers with enough tools to appropriately address multiculturalism, Kim and Connelly (2019) asserted preservice teachers had a positive attitude and respect of cultural differences which expressed a necessary sensitivity. “As multicultural classrooms become increasingly more common, it is necessary to boost the multicultural teaching efficacy of preservice teachers as early as possible” (p.3). I found Kim and Connelly’s assertion to be substantiated by answers given by the participants in this study. Although K2 is a minority, she shared the same type of sentiment as D1 who is not a minority and previously had limited exposure to diverse populations before attending University. Both participants reflected the belief that there is a need for acceptance of diverse cultures in their student populations. Both seemed to accept the idea that diversity of population was manageable and could be effective in the personal growth of the students and as well as teachers.

Discussion of Theme 3: Expectation

There are preservice teachers who began their student teaching with learning of pedagogy as their primary experience. Many are concerned that they will make mistakes or that the responsibility of being teacher-mentor will come with overwhelming

challenges. “Teaching is a decidedly difficult act, requiring English Language Arts (ELA) teachers to respond to constantly changing subject matter, standards and students that are shaped by complex societal, cultural, political and socioeconomic factors” (as cited in Noel & Shoffner, 2019, p. 35). D1 and K2 made statements that reflected their own concerns relative to expectations of future challenges as a teacher and expectations of students. It is possible that racial identity impacted D1 and K2’s expectations and concerns of what was to come. Delamater (2019) asserts that preservice teacher's racial identities may play a role in shaping their teaching expectations.

Discussion of Theme 4: Mentorship

D1 and K2 express a strong desire to be effective as educators. This involves meeting a variety of needs of each student. More than teaching them how to read and write, both of these teachers reflect a desire to make a connection that makes students better people as well. This expressed desire transitions these teachers from simply educators, to the role of a mentor. As previously stated in chapter 2, Maddamsetti (2018), states preservice teachers that assume this mentorship role bring about positive influence, learning, and growth. Often, a mentor must possess the skills to fill a variety of roles. A mentor is a teacher, an advisor, and more importantly, someone who is not judgmental. Mentors teach mentees meaningful activities designed to transfer values, knowledge, attitudes, and skills that create an unbroken chain of traditions within their cultural group (Biggs et al., 2014).

Implications for Educating Preservice Teachers

As a result of this study, several implications for policies and practice arose. There is a need for preservice teachers to understand they have decided by their career choice that they are committing to a career that has a problem with retention. According to research, to enhance and retain effective teachers, additional courses should be added to their core requirements in their education programs. These courses should include effective teaching strategies relative to the myriad of conditions that make students at risk above. These courses should be created above and beyond what may already be included in the core requirements. A broader awareness of the issues will better prepare preservice teachers that may not have had the benefit of working with a critical service learning project. Secondly, emphasis should be placed on alerting preservice teachers to the dangers of implicit bias and the unintended effects on students of color. Sensitivity to culture differences by teachers is imperative for educational growth of students. As stated in chapter II, Brady and Esmail (2019) assert that there is not a consistent practice of preparing preservice teachers for diverse populations. They use the term “mono-ethnic background” in their study to reflect the large number of preservice teachers who are white and middle class that may have had multicultural training but lack the cultural understanding to maximize effective teaching practices.

Recommendations for Future Research

In this qualitative study, I explored how preservice teachers are affected by involvement in culturally sustaining service-learning projects on a college campus, and their preparedness for working with culturally diverse at-risk youth. The data collected

for this study were from preservice teachers seeking certification in grades 4-8 and who volunteer in an after-school tutoring program. Based upon the results of this study, the following recommendations for future research are made.

To include more perspectives, researchers might include different ethnic backgrounds and gender in the study to explore how colleges and universities could include critical service learning projects as a core requirement or as an internship required by all students in the program prior to graduation. Data collected could direct future research and provide suggestions for more effective teacher preparation in college education programs. In addition, further research is recommended to replicate this study using a mixed methods approach and using more participants. A mixed-methods approach would combine both qualitative and quantitative methods in addressing the research problem or research questions. COVID-19 has changed life as we all know it and it impacted this study as well by limiting research parameters initially considered. These limitations contributed to this study's brevity. As the primary researcher, I sincerely believe that this includes valuable information: however, there is a considerable amount of future research that could be expanded upon as a result of the findings of this study.

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APPENDIX A



Date: May 11, 2020 9:13 AM CDT

TO: Ulysses Mack Nancy Votteler

FROM: SHSU IRB

PROJECT TITLE: The Impact of Culturally Sustaining Critical Service Learning
Projects on Preservice Teachers

PROTOCOL #: IRB-2020-3

SUBMISSION TYPE: Initial

ACTION: Approved

DECISION DATE: May 10, 2020

ADMINISTRATIVE CHECK-IN DATE: May 10, 2021

EXPEDITED REVIEW CATEGORY: 6. Collection of data from voice, video, digital, or
image recordings made for research purposes.

7. Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited
to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication,
cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey,
interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or
quality assurance methodologies.

**SPECIAL IRB UPDATE REGARDING THE COVID-19 CRISIS: Although this
study is approved, please note that face-to-face human subject research must be
paused until the CDC and SHSU has determined that the current COVID-19 crisis
has passed. This pause is effective immediately. Approved online human subject
research may continue. If you have an approved face-to-face study and deem it
feasible to move the study to online data collection, please submit a Modification
through Cayuse. Indicate in the Modification that the change is being implemented
as a COVID-19 safety precaution to help the IRB prioritize the submission.**

The IRB will continue reviewing applications unless we are advised to do otherwise.

Greetings,

The above-referenced submission has been reviewed by the IRB and it has been Approved. Because this study received expedited review and the IRB determined that a renewal submission is not needed, this decision does not necessarily expire; however, you will be receiving an email notification on the anniversary of this study approval, which will be on May 10, 2021 (NOTE: please review the reminder information below regarding Study Administrative Check-In). This study approval is based on an appropriate risk/benefit ratio and a project design wherein the risks have been minimized. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

Since Cayuse IRB does not currently possess the ability to provide a "stamp of approval" on any recruitment or consent documentation, it is the strong recommendation of this office to please include the following approval language in the footer of those recruitment and consent documents: IRB-2020-3/May 10, 2020/May 10, 2021.

Please remember that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the project and insurance of participant understanding followed by a signed consent form. Informed consent must continue throughout the project via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal regulations require each participant receive a copy of the signed consent document.

Modifications: Please note that any revision to previously approved materials must be approved by this committee prior to initiation. Please submit a Modification Submission through [Cayuse IRB](#) for this procedure.

Incidents: All UNANTICIPATED PROBLEMS involving risks to subjects or others and SERIOUS and UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported promptly to this office. Please submit an Incident Submission through [Cayuse IRB](#) for this procedure. All Department of Health and Human Services and sponsor reporting requirements should also be followed.

Study Administrative Check-In: Based on the risks, this project does not require renewal. Rather, you are required to administratively check in with the IRB on an annual basis. May 10, 2021 is the anniversary of the review of your protocol. The following are the conditions of the IRB approval for IRB-2020-3 The Impact of Culturally Sustaining Critical Service Learning Projects on Preservice Teachers .

1. When this project is finished or terminated, a Closure submission is required.
2. Changes to the approved protocol require prior board approval (NOTE: see the directive above related to Modifications).
3. Human subjects training is required to be kept current at citiprogram.org by renewing training every 5 years.
4. If incidents (i.e., adverse events) or unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others (UPIRSO) (e.g., data collected unintentionally without obtaining informed consent) have occurred during this approval period, you are required to submit a Incident to report the adverse event or UPIRSO to the IRB.

Please note that all research records should be retained for a minimum of three years after the completion of the project. If you have any questions, please contact the Sharla Miles at 936-294-4875 or irb@shsu.edu. Please include your protocol number in all correspondence with this committee.

Sincerely,

Donna M. Desforges, Ph.D.
Chair, IRB

APPENDIX B

Email to Potential Participants

Dear pre-service teacher,

My name is Ulysses Mack. I am a doctoral student at Sam Houston State University in the School of Teaching and Learning. I am kindly requesting your participation in a doctoral research study that I am conducting titled: The Impact of Culturally Sustaining Critical Service Learning Projects on Preservice Teachers. The purpose of this research is to evaluate how pre-service teachers are affected by involvement in culturally sustaining critical service learning projects on college campuses. The study involves providing basic demographic information, completing one survey, and completing an interview via Zoom.

Participation is completely voluntary, and you may withdraw from the study at any time. Any personal information provided will be kept confidential, stored on a password protected, encrypted computer and will only be accessible to the primary researcher.

If you would like to participate in the study, please read the Informed Consent letter and send me a return email verifying your participation. Your participation in the research will be of great importance and I truly appreciate your consideration.

Thank you for your time and participation

Sincerely,

Ulysses Mack, M.A.,
Doctoral Student
School of Teaching and Learning
Sam Houston State University

APPENDIX C

Student Information Cover Letter



Informed Consent

My name is Ulysses Brian Mack and I am doctoral candidate of the Literacy Department at Sam Houston State University. I would like to take this opportunity to invite you to participate in a research study of the impact of culturally sustaining critical service learning projects on pre-service teachers. I hope that data from this research will assist preservice teachers in adjusting to diversity in the classroom. You have been asked to participate in the research because you are or will soon be a preservice teacher.

The research is relatively straightforward, and we do not expect the research to pose any risk to any of the volunteer participants. If you consent to participate in this research, you will be asked to sign a consent form, complete a participant profile sheet, and complete a questionnaire. Any data obtained from you will only be used for the purpose of evaluating how preservice teachers are affected by involvement in culturally sustaining critical service learning projects. Under no circumstances will you or any other participants who participated in this research be identified. In addition, your data will remain confidential. This research will require about one hour of your time. Participants will not be paid or otherwise compensated for their participation in this project.

Your participation in this research is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which the subject is otherwise entitled, and the subject may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which the subject is otherwise entitled. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask me using the contact information below. If you are interested, the results of this study will be available at the conclusion of the project.

If you have any questions about this research, please feel free to contact me, Ulysses Brian Mack, or Dr. Nancy Votteler. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as research participants, please contact Sharla Miles, Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, using her contact information below.

Ulysses Brian Mack School of Teaching and Learning Sam Houston State University Huntsville, TX 77341 Phone: (713) 447-8081	Dr. Nancy Votteler School of Teaching and Learning Sam Houston State University Huntsville, TX 77341 Phone: (936) 294-1135	Sharla Miles Office of Research and Sponsored Programs Sam Houston State University Huntsville, TX 77341 Phone: (936) 294-4875
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E-mail:ubm001@shsu.edu	E-mail:nkvotteler@shsu.edu	Email: irb@shsu.edu
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☐ I understand the above and consent to participate.

☐ I do not wish to participate in the current study.

APPENDIX D

Sam Houston State University Consent for Participation in Research

KEY INFORMATION FOR *Impact of Culturally Sustaining Critical Service Learning Projects on Pre-service Teachers*

You are being asked to be a participant in a research study about the impact of culturally sustaining critical service learning projects on pre-service Teachers conducted by Ulysses Brian Mack in the school of Teaching and Learning at Sam Houston State University. You have been asked to participate in the research because you presently are a pre-service teacher in the school of education and may be eligible to participate.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE, PROCEDURES, AND DURATION OF THE STUDY?

The purpose of this research is to evaluate how pre-service teachers are affected by involvement in culturally sustaining critical service learning projects on college campuses. If you agree to be in this research, we would ask you to do the following things:

- Sign the consent form via encrypted email.
- Complete the participant profile sheet
- Participants will be asked to complete a questionnaire via encrypted email which ask questions relative to personal opinions about working with at risk youth and being a pre-service teacher. All correspondence will be conducted via zoom or encrypted email. Responses to the questionnaire will be conducted via SurveyMonkey.
- Your survey responses will be kept confidential to the extent of the technology being used. SurveyMonkey collects IP addresses for respondents to surveys they host; however, the ability to connect your survey responses to your IP address has been disabled for this survey. That means that I will not be able to identify your responses. You should, however, keep in mind that answers to specific questions may make you more easily identifiable. The privacy policy for SurveyMonkey can be viewed at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/mp/legal/privacy-policy/>
- Pre-service teachers will also be interviewed via Zoom. I will ask questions relative to personal opinions about working with at risk youth and how your opinions of being a pre-service teacher have changed based on interactions in the program.

- Total participation required by pre-service teachers in the study is expected to not exceed 1 hour.

If you agree to sign the consent form, you agree to be available for an interview. The researcher will contact you for a time and place convenient to you to conduct the interview. The interviews will last less than one hour.

Approximately 3-20 participants may be involved in this research.

By doing this study, we hope to learn how critical service learning projects could positively impact the effectiveness of pre-service teachers upon graduation. Therefore, the study of the interaction between at risk youth and pre-service teachers will produce information that will be useful. Your participation in this research will last about 1 hour.

WHAT ARE REASONS YOU MIGHT CHOOSE TO VOLUNTEER FOR THIS STUDY?

The benefit of this research and your involvement is to gain a greater understanding of the role pre-service teachers have with at risk youths. There are no direct benefits to the participants, but future pre-service teachers may benefit from the research produced.

For a complete description of benefits, refer to the Detailed Consent.

WHAT ARE REASONS YOU MIGHT CHOOSE NOT TO VOLUNTEER FOR THIS STUDY?

No potential risks or discomforts anticipated for the participants. A participant may not want to participate in the study for their own personal reasons.

For a complete description of risks, refer to the Detailed Consent.

DO YOU HAVE TO TAKE PART IN THE STUDY?

If you decide to take part in the study, it should be because you really want to volunteer. You will not lose any services, benefits, or rights you would normally have if you choose not to volunteer. As a student, if you decide not to take part in this study, your choice will have no effect on your academic status or class grade(s).

WHAT IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, SUGGESTIONS OR CONCERNS?

The person in charge of this study is Ulysses Mack of the Sam Houston State University Department of education in the School of Teaching and Learning. If you have questions, suggestions, or concerns regarding this study or you want to withdraw from the study, contact: Ulysses Mack (713) 447-8081 ubm001@shsu.edu or and Dr. Nancy Votteler (936) 294-1135 nkvotteler@shsu.edu. If you have any questions, suggestions or concerns about your rights as a volunteer in this research, contact the Office of Research

and Sponsored Programs – Sharla Miles at 936-294-4875 or e-mail ORSP at sharla_miles@shsu.edu.

APPENDIX E

Demographic Survey Questionnaire

The purpose of this research study is to describe how preservice teachers beginning their student

teaching internship perceive multicultural education and their preparation to teach culturally

diverse at risk students in a culturally sustaining critical service learning Project.

Directions: Please respond to the following items by filling in the appropriate space to reflect

your response as to your opinion on whether preservice teachers are prepared to teach culturally

diverse student populations.

Sex M___ F___

Age_____

Ethnicity_____

Major_____

During this part of the survey please express your current knowledge, behaviors, and attitudes

related to issues concerning diversity.

Teacher Multicultural Attitude Survey

Strongly Disagree = 1; Disagree = 2; Uncertain = 3; Agree = 4; Strongly Agree = 5

1. Teaching methods need to be adapted to meet the needs of a 1 2 3 4 5

culturally diverse student group.

2. Sometimes I think there is too much emphasis placed on multicultural 1 2 3 4 5

awareness and training for teachers.

3. Teachers have the responsibility to be aware of their students' cultural 1 2 3 4 5

backgrounds.

4. It is not the teacher's responsibility to encourage pride in one's 1 2 3 4 5 culture.
5. As classrooms become more culturally diverse, I believe the teacher's job 1 2 3 4 5 becomes increasingly challenging.
6. I believe the teacher's role needs to be redefined to address the 1 2 3 4 5 needs of students from culturally different backgrounds.
Strongly Disagree = 1; Disagree = 2; Uncertain = 3; Agree = 4; Strongly Agree = 5
7. When dealing with bilingual students, some teachers may 1 2 3 4 5 misinterpret different communication styles as behavior problems.
8. As classrooms become more culturally diverse, I feel the teacher's 1 2 3 4 5 job becomes increasingly rewarding.
9. As a preservice teacher, I feel I can learn a great deal from students 1 2 3 4 5 with culturally different backgrounds.
10. Multicultural training for teachers is not necessary. 1 2 3 4 5
11. In order to be an effective teacher, one needs to be aware of 1 2 3 4 5 cultural differences present in the classroom.
12. Multicultural awareness training can help me work more 1 2 3 4 5 effectively with a diverse student population.
13. Students should learn to communicate in English only. 1 2 3 4 5
14. Today's curriculum gives undue importance to multiculturalism 1 2 3 4 5 and diversity.
15. Regardless of the racial and ethnic make up of my class, it is 1 2 3 4 5 important for all students to be aware of multicultural diversity.
16. Being multiculturally aware is not relevant for the students I 1 2 3 4 5 will teach.
17. Teaching students about cultural diversity will only create conflict 1 2 3 4 5 in the classroom.
18. My professional education courses have presented me with techniques 1 2 3 4 5

for effectively teaching children whose national and/or ethnic backgrounds differ from my own.

19. My professional education courses have made me more aware of the 1 2 3 4 5 need for cultural diversity in education.

20. My professional education courses have given me the knowledge to be 1 2 3 4 5 be able to locate and evaluate culturally diverse materials.

21. When I complete my training at this university, I will be sufficiently 1 2 3 4 5 prepared to teach culturally diverse students.

VITA

Sam Houston State University, Huntsville Texas
Doctor of Education, Literacy, 2021

Texas Southern University, Houston, TX
Master of Arts in English, 2006

Clark Atlanta University, Atlanta, GA
Bachelor of Arts in English, 1993

Lone Star Community College, Houston, TX
English Literature Instructor,
 2013-Present (Full Time)

- ☐ Prepare course materials such as syllabus, homework assignments and handouts
- ☐ Evaluate and grade student's class work, assignments and papers
- ☐ Prepare and deliver lectures to undergraduate students
- ☐ Initiate facilitate and moderate classroom discussion that promotes critical thinking

Texas Southern University, Houston, TX
English Instructor, 2001 – 2013

- ☐ Initiate, facilitate and moderate classroom discussion that promotes critical thinking
- ☐ Prepare and deliver lectures to undergraduate students
- ☐ Evaluate and grade student's class work, assignments and papers
- ☐ Prepare course materials such as syllabus, homework assignments and handouts

Texas Southern University/Summer Academy, Houston, TX
Transitional Preparedness Instructor, 2001-2009

- ☐ Provided assistance to students in college writing centers
- ☐ Maintained regularly scheduled office hours in order to advise and assist students

PRESENTATIONS

Re-energizing Students: Using Popular Media as a teaching mechanism to enhance student retention. Presented to the Student Success Services faculty and staff. Texas Southern University, 2010

GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Texas Southern English Department Grant, 2006
 Tom Joyner Foundation Grant, 2005

AWARDS AND HONORS

Master Instructor G.U.A.C. Summer Academy, Texas Southern University (2005)